

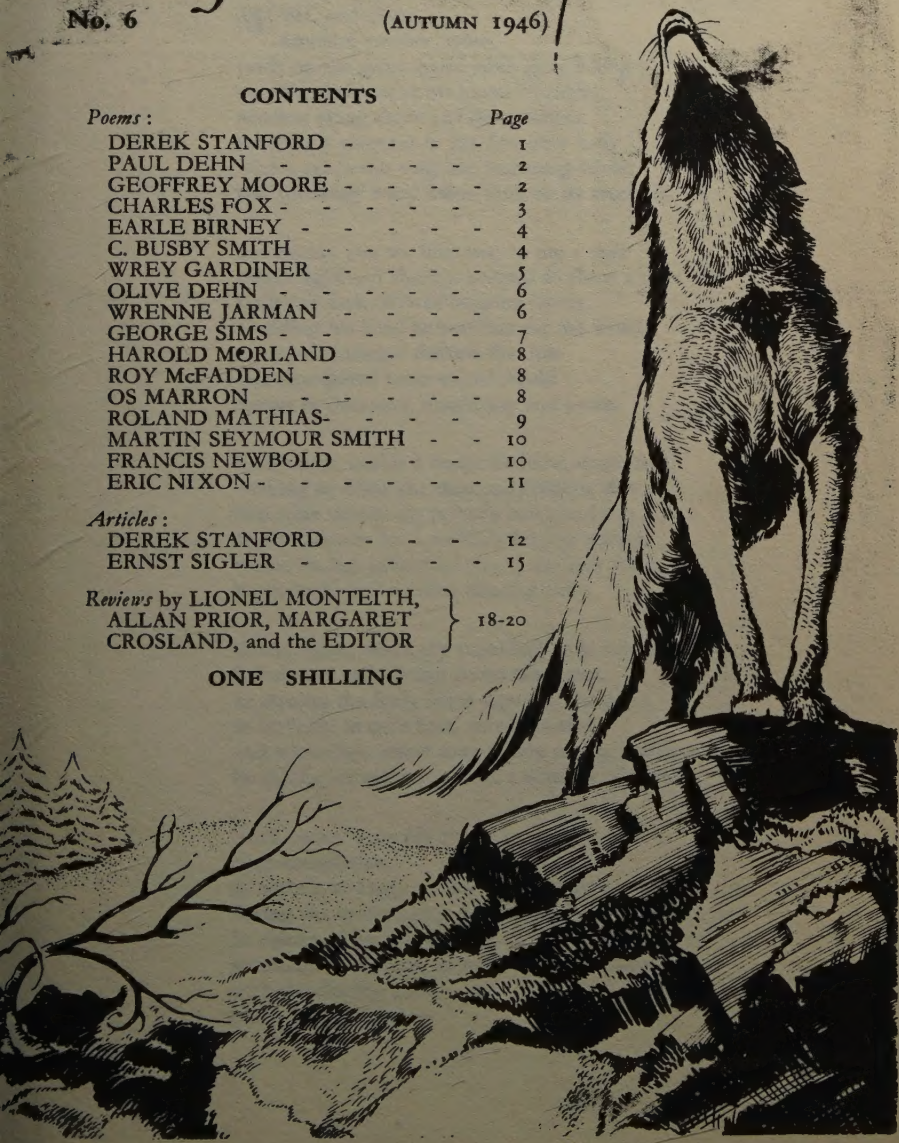
OUTPOST

Edited by **HOWARD SERGEANT**
No. 6 (AUTUMN 1946)

CONTENTS

<i>Poems :</i>	<i>Page</i>
DEREK STANFORD - - - - -	1
PAUL DEHN - - - - -	2
GEOFFREY MOORE - - - - -	2
CHARLES FOX - - - - -	3
EARLE BIRNEY - - - - -	4
C. BUSBY SMITH - - - - -	4
WREY GARDINER - - - - -	5
OLIVE DEHN - - - - -	6
WRENNE JARMAN - - - - -	6
GEORGE SIMS - - - - -	7
HAROLD MORLAND - - - - -	8
ROY McFADDEN - - - - -	8
OS MARRON - - - - -	8
ROLAND MATHIAS - - - - -	9
MARTIN SEYMOUR SMITH - - - - -	10
FRANCIS NEWBOLD - - - - -	10
ERIC NIXON - - - - -	11
 <i>Articles :</i>	
DEREK STANFORD - - - - -	12
ERNST SIGLER - - - - -	15
 <i>Reviews by</i> LIONEL MONTEITH, ALLAN PRIOR, MARGARET CROSLAND, and the EDITOR	18-20

ONE SHILLING



THE PARIAH COUNTS HIS JEWELS BY NIGHT

' Buveurs de lune '—Verlaine

DEREK STANFORD

MMUSIC and kisses,
firelight, candles, wine,
cards on the green baize table gaily falling :
outside, the poet in his house of night,
striding along those star-lit corridors,
standing a moment in the draughty halls
where gas-lamps sing like humming-birds,
and the reedy wind keeps tune on its recorder.

Sometimes you see him stop to tap a wall
where light and shadow seemed to show a door
under an arch of over-hanging leaves.
Nodding his head he searches for the word,
some incandescent Sesame that lets
this unrequited lover of the world
depart to darkness, magic, joy and peace.

Sometimes, beside a hedge he halts, enchanted,
wishing to drink the diamond-flashing dew
like wine within the privet's lacquered cup ;
and sometimes by a puddle's broken mirror,
where ice has splintered round the inky water,
he stares to find a fallen floating star.

Often, again, when the twinkling frost has sprinkled
its salt and satin lining down the street,
he strokes the furry fence-tops and the gates
as lovingly as cat's hair, velvet, moss ;
and when light snow rests faintly on the branches
he thinks the night has born a summer of fern.

Such empty ways his course ;
such consolation
as night's deranging stillness has to give.
Seeing the moon like a dish of solid gold
he thinks of heavenly banquets, and would dine—
scarecrow of dreams, escape's fine connoisseur—
with the shining gods,
being outcast of men.

FOR THOSE WHO ARE ALIVE

PAUL DEHN

IT is finished. The enormous dust-cloud over Europe
Lifts like a million swallows ; and a light,
Drifting in craters, touches the quiet dead.

Now, at the bugle's hour, before the blood
Cakes in a clean wind on their marble faces,
Making them monuments ; before the sun,

Hoisted mast-high under a hammered noon,
Whitens the bone that feeds the earth ; before
Wheat-ear springs green, again, in the green Spring

And they are bread in the bodies of the young :
Be strong to remember how the bread died, screaming ;
Gangrene was corn, and monuments went mad.

HOW IN THE SMOOTH-SHINE ROAD

GEOFFREY MOORE

HOW in the smooth-shine road the feet
Of dwarfs and mirrored fools play games !
Give names to old moustaches and to dames
And you shall have a wonder to repeat.

A wrinkled Hogarth starveling maunders
On the kibes of roll-faced Bess ;
No line could sound the emptiness
Of this doll-chaperoned Clerk Saunders.

And all in the smooth-shine road go pit and pat
With mincing feet and dodder motion.
This one, blown up from the bed of the ocean,
Flips like a skate, slow, fat and flat.

This is the city's curve and glass,
The under-view of the habit-yoked.

Softly, softly one day she will walk
On a focussed lens through my present past.

POEM IN AUTUMN

CHARLES FOX

THOUGH the high north wind pins your streaming hair
like a flame against the darker tapestry
of autumn in England, though the colder peaks
nuzzle against the greasy clouds, and tor
and scarp and highest eyrie shed the drapes
they wore in summer and are the hungry dogs
that whine with November, your body is ripened
by another warmth than the vanished sun,
and your breasts are rivers that will not freeze
with the touch of winter's fingers.

Copper the beech, the reddest tints
carpet the woods, and your feet draw replies
to answer their tread—the crisp echoes
of dead leaves. If here where the parapet
of stone crosses the wider brook
you lean and watch the loosened straw
sliding on the water's surface, snagging in the weeds
on either side, the wind again takes your lazy hair
and combs it with silent fingers, and unseen
braids it loosely across your throat.

Oh lovely your beauty, the imperfect year
impinges with its brittle finish,
and strongly across the sleeping hills
blows the north wind and adds its questioning
to that of rooks in the disused quarry.
But in the wind that hurries by your cheek
and carries your hair upon its wilder surge
lives my love
that must hold this high impatience by reins of steel,
suppler yet than softest leather but curbing the impulse,
leaving me but the gladness of this walk,
the copper leaves upon the harder ground
and your face smiling in the stream
that has flowed and merged with the wider river.

1945

69

INTROVERT

EARLE BIRNEY

HIS mind to him is tight St. James'
where thoughts like raddled ducks are pulled
by lines unsensed, on water ruled.

Unleashed by beetle-gleam they wedge
ecstatic rumps into the bland
blind air, on darkness stand.

Here lecher sparrows lust for crumbs
among the picnicking desires,
and frocks of chance upstart their fires.

Come hopes like lovers, wheel fat pigeon
fears, yet coils this brain of leaves
within the stone that skull achieves.

And when dusk locks the beaks of day,
over the silent cast of stars
great swans move out across the bars.

Some float like sloops of all his wish,
flow and flower his lost delight—
and some spread black and shatter night.

HILL OF JUNIPER

(For Peggy)

C. BUSBY SMITH

AFTER the tumult loud beneath the walls
of day's bright city; after the exodus
of garish crowds into the deep night's dark,
my eye's Andromache waiting for Hector's kiss
of beauty returning, steals to the world's pale rim
dimmed now by branching shadows; evening's petals;
(the lotus of the sunset coiling for sleep
in the still sadness of the night's dark leaves)
and sees once more the juniper ascend
all the deep hill's breast into the strange world's end.

Eclipsed in peculiar shadow the quiet shapes
of lovers turned to jade and whispering ghosts
murmur their secrets to night's hooded nun
who walks among them like a thrush's song
telling her liquid beads of sound ; and soon
like a knife the moon cuts through the ridge of time
binding the earth and sky, and starlight quivers
the listening leaf-mould with a frozen finger,
and the thin wind's kiss budding like a flower
opens love's eyes out of the dark leaves' bower.

And love is shadows trembling through deep grasses
and love is blueness of the lantern berry
and love is silence locked in a tree's green arms.

And love is the mauve strange scent of juniper
and love is the moon-blached fruit's blue essences
sweet as a raindrop's kiss ; bitter as sharp hail.

And love is a hill of juniper, still at midnight,
telling deep tales of wonder to the dark.

TIME IS A HARPY

WREY GARDINER

TIME is a harpy, stealer of delight,
Negro walking pad-foot through the night.

A dust on china bowls of ancient line
Carved on the heart, like memory of wine.

Something we knew when years were aching love,
Lose with the half-heard wood-note of the dove.

Time is the horse-haired laughter of the past
Of all the ghosts who know we cannot last

Beyond the hard light of our fearful day
When death will bear us cryptically away

To the framed portrait of the unknown face
To the still vision of the statue's immovable place.

SNOW LIES ON THE HILLS

OLIVE DEHN

THE snow lies on the hills,
The frost upon the bough,
And where is promise of
An early springtime now ?

A week ago, I saw
The spinster snowdrop's heart
And heard the crocus-sheaths
Burst wantonly apart.

Oh, cheating month, to light
An aconite's small flare
And raise the jasmine up
With stars among her hair,

Then snuff all out with snow
Nor ever heed the cost.
For in this twilight world,
One yellow crocus lost,

One primrose turned to rust
By hoar-frost in the lane
Is worth more tears than all
Your February rain.

By such faint sparks do men
Find light enough to live.
In such faint warmth is born
The longing to forgive.

THE POETRY IS IN THE LIVING

WRENNE JARMAN

IN the being-born, and in the waking
To the child's vision, chrysm-lensed
The magic honeysuckle and the spangled snow ;
In the hard death of childhood, and the making
Of shameful errors never really cleansed.
O dusty honeysuckle and O mangled snow
The poetry is in the aching.

In the adolescent cruelty : the giving
Of offence, for choice to those loved most.
There will be time enough to be remorseful !
In the strong push to midstream, yet believing
The oar stroked by the hand not Holy Ghost—
O maelstroms in wait for the resourceful !
The poetry is in the living.

In the strange illness of reason, denying
To him skilled himself in procreation
The visible pebble and the tangible rose ;
In the painful substitutions, identifying
At last beyond the thickets of damnation
The magic honeysuckles and the spangled snows. . .
The poetry is in the dying.

WIND'S LITTORAL WORK

GEORGE SIMS

WIND'S littoral work is
To make beds uneasy
To counterfeit dreams and
To disturb them coldly,
Hold us where we know not.
Tide's trick is to present
Irons and bewilder,
Uncovering scars and
Washing them. (The absent
Swellstrength with dignity
Lifts distant heads that are
Not to be recognised)
What is this lost object ?
A fish head, immobile
Clown face refusing its
Death story. What are these,
Its pillow straws ? Golden
Long hairs from a man's ear.
And walls of harsh sandplant ?
Foundations of the sky,
Found in each shell's muscle.
And whole sea narrative,
All this yelling without identity ?

IN THIS DEAD SEASON

HAROLD MORLAND

IN this dead season, Lord, give leave to give
My leaves till the black boughs and fretted lace,
My winter's remnant, have let go all grace
Of dancing green, my mask of how to live
Opposing storms with summer's negative,
This beauty. Affirming in a buried place
My root, I'd lose appearance, flower, and face
To catch no comfort in my wits' high sieve ;
Retreat within and bud no plea ; but bend
To every beating wind, the heavens' breath
That leaves me breathless. Or I'd groan and break ;
But learn my shape when helpless to defend
Deciduous outworks, cold with crystal death ;
My core alone my care, the will to wake.

FEAR OF SILENCE

ROY MCFADDEN

SO quiet an evening ; now, so quiet a field
Of sky, with gentle lambs of loitering cloud :
Mind is fleeced of thought and memory reeled
Down to a spindle. Listen ; such a crowd
Of silence at the door :—but O no loud
Querulous quietness ; now past's all repealed,
Grief's grasses and thought's thickets pulled and ploughed,
And a new skyscape suddenly revealed.
So quiet a field of silence. You must turn
And follow printed words' appearances
Across a page, afraid that you may learn
Some frigid truth from those cool silences,
And, trespassing upon eternity,
Dissolve like rain into anonymous sea.

FOR A CAPTIVE

Os Marron

A lion prowls this frail cage of bone
and prays for fiercer stars than those
given him by ceiling fantasies.

Enemy or mate under his pulsing muscle
a veldt as wide for his fleet foot
as was desire hobbled in the net.

Stars slipping through the net like fish
and black skies on the move in a tide
like seas unfettered from their bed.

A paw on the unrolling plain
spinning the whole earth with the weight
of his wonder and freedom from hate.

Such could be strong without breaking peace
in lands where the high menaces lean.
God, if he suddenly were free again !

THE LURKING ANCESTOR

' Man hath no centre, but misery ; there and only there, he is fixed, and sure to find himself.'—Donne.

ROLAND MATHIAS

PAIN, you come out of this patch
Of frozen weed, you dwell
In this rubble of wall-no-more and wall-to-be,
You pace up and down on the shore
Violently and are not freed.
I know you, you are the ridged earth, the husky look
Of the sky, the shrunken seed
At the core.

Men have been born of you, misery,
Under this hill, in dark
Winters when only the muttering pylons walk
And stamp in the fields. You in the greed
Of groundsel, your long will
In the hungry handlebar swoop of white
Gulls on the houses, in you is still
The gift of the need
And the answer, O were it the least of your lies
In despite,
The mark of the beast in the furrows,
Of God in the fight.

HE CAME TO VISIT ME

MARTIN SEYMOUR SMITH

HE came to visit me, my mortal messenger ;
I saw the sorrow stamped upon his face.
He bade me chide at him, for grief ; ' But sir,'
I said, ' you know your dominating place.'

' That's it,' he said to me, ' you spin the thread
Of life in me ; you make me flesh and blood,
Although we both wish now that I was dead.
This sorrow on my face, it is my hood ;

Behind there is a blank white wall of skin—
An eyeless, mouthless, noseless face : neutrality.
It is dark death that lives behind the thin
Pale flesh. You have my eyes, I cannot see.'

So death it was he knew behind that sheet
Of skin ; darkness behind its passive light.
And all around him, while he spoke, there beat
The endless drummers of subtracting night.

PENELOPE

FRANCIS NEWBOLD

IS the war hard, Ulysses,
hard and long
as you spill your real blood for things lighter than air—
a woman, a minstrel's song ?

Is the wall high, Ulysses,
the struggle fierce ?
Does a moment of waiting seem eternity, entombed
in the bowels of your Horse ?

Are the winds wroth, Ulysses,
the waves rough ?
Is the water cold as you clutch your raft, remembering
the warmth of love ?

Are the songs sweet, Ulysses,
the syrens sing ?
In Calypso's dreamful cave do you, old Winter,
frolic in second spring ?

I am content, Ulysses,
these things should be.
I am not jealous of the sword, the sea, the nymph,
knowing you will come to see

all the fruits, Ulysses,
of your long pain and toil
granaried in the Ithaca of my heart, harvested
in my sad evening smile.

THE SCAR

ERIC NIXON

O strange heraldic rose of fate
the curlew furls his shroud ;
the frieze of fell falls at your gate,
the mountains lance your cloud.

The sleeper in the castle wakes
his vassal from his cell
and rides his horse across the rakes
and hoofs the rooflike fell.

The deer adorns the thorny wood ;
the hunter swings his bow,
the wounded hart starts at the blood
and rushes from his foe.

The rider gallops through the firs
chasing the wounded hart :
the Scar accepts the scarlet spurs
where fell and river part,

and horse and rider scream their death
to the silent stream below -
where into water flows their breath
and the death-red roses grow.

MOVEMENTS IN THE MIRROR : IMAGISM

DEREK STANFORD

ROUND about the year 1914 the realisation began to dawn on a group of young poets that English verse was becoming extremely flabby. They found that poetry was being written—to adapt a phrase of the late Keith Douglas—with words that did not “work for their keep”; language was putting on a lot of surplus fat.

The censure of these young writers was largely directed against the middle-aged spread of the Georgian Poetry movement, where style was quickly running to seed. This school, in its turn, had partly started as an assertion of a natural way of writing in reaction to the cult of artificiality, to the orchid-and-glass-house art of the ‘Nineties. At its inception it stressed the values of the healthy simple natural life, sang the delights of the countryside, and could very well be described as the equivalent of open-air painting in verse.

In its efforts, however, not to overcolour the scene, not to keep the loud pedal down on the conscious literary note; in its attempts to be natural at all costs, it often ran into mediocre writing. The natural, after all, though, cannot be willed. It is either spontaneous or exists as a fake. So it was with much Georgian verse; and the deliberated simplicities of many of its poets led often to weak and childish impressions.

Thus, under the influence of this new pastoral attitude, a rustic raciness of style all too easily degenerated into a kind of village-idiot utterance. Here, for example, in the following lines, by a poet who has written better things, we get that kind of grinning wonder that goes so well with straws in the hair. It seems almost as if the poet is describing just this kind of vacancy when he writes of

“ . . . men divinely wise
Who look and see in starry skies
Not stars so much as robins’ eyes,
And when these pale away
Hear flocks of shining pleiades
Among the plum and apple trees
Sing in the summer day.”

Even weaker in structure and sentiment, flaccid in expression and tasteless in thought; in no way enhanced by the simile which serves

to show us how figurative language can be as commonplace as literal diction, are the lines of another poem by the same poet Ralph Hodgson:

“The song of men, all sorts and kinds,
As many tempers, moods and minds
As leaves are on a tree.”

Into this atmosphere of limp expression—where writing so often draggled loosely like Maypole ribbons in the rain—the new movement of Imagism entered like a drying tonic breeze. These new poets who included Ezra Pound, T. S. Eliot, Herbert Read, Richard Aldington, H.D., and D. H. Lawrence demanded a general toning up of verse. In the preface to *Some Imagist Poets* which appeared in 1915, including work by certain of the above, six ‘common principles’ were set forth which I will briefly try to precis.

They desired “to employ always the exact word, not the nearly-exact, nor the merely decorative word”; to produce a poetry that was “hard and clear, never blurred, nor indefinite”; “to present an image (hence the name—Imagist)”, believing “that poetry should render particulars exactly and not deal in vague generalities”, and that “concentration” was the “very essence of poetry”. They also championed free-verse, not insisting upon it, but maintaining “that the individuality of a poet may often be better expressed in free-verse than in conventional form. In poetry, a new cadence means a new idea.”

This, then, was the rather mixed bag which constituted the Imagist programme; mixed but in no wise contradictory, for these six points were seen in practice to complement and not to oppose each other. This attempt to delineate a clear picture in a poem, to render the precise shape of something with no woolly overtones, required the use of the exact word—a kind of dead-accurate poetic draughtsmanship. Again, to employ the old jaded music of some platitudinous verse-metre would be to blur the firm concise effect of the thought or the image in anticipated echoes.

The general aim of the Imagist poets can be seen as an effort, parallel to Cézanne’s desire, to make of impressionism an art which was durable, hard, and classic. More often, however, what they lacked was the earlier artist’s architectural force; and so their verses sometimes affect us as being the fine-worked miniatures of the word—Cézannes of the cameo, so to speak.

Whereas the impressionist poets of the 1890s were all atmosphere, with lines as drifting, subtle and imprecise as the form of a shifting

mist, how minutely, succinctly vivid is the following image of Eliot (who was, of course, an Imagist but something more, much more, as well) :-

“ white-powdered arms bare .
But in the lamplight downed with light brown hair.”

One of the essential characteristics of poetry, as Herbert Read has pointed out, is what S. T. Coleridge called, “the power of reducing multitude into unity of effect”. This concentration which the Imagists prized is exhibited in the two-line ‘Chinese’ poem of Pound :-

“ Fu I loved the high cloud and the hill,
Alas he died of alcohol.”

This, indeed, is what so many verses of these poets tended to become: whole works packed into an epitaph or image; a kind of pictorial mason’s shorthand.

Nevertheless, it would be wrong to see the achievement of Imagism in the picture-book poetry of H. D., Richard Aldington, and the early verse of Herbert Read and Pound alone. The high record is to be found in the latter’s *Maunderley* and the longer earlier works of Eliot.

Here, as in the *Rhapsody on a Windy Night* where

“ The memory throws up high and dry
A crowd of twisted things ”

the deep subconscious sources of the image were beginning to be recognised. Into this dark substratum the surrealist and neo-romantic poets were one day to sink their shafts for inspiration. That, however, is a later story.

NOTICES

ANTHOLOGIES IN PREPARATION

THE first OUTPOSTS anthology, *For Those Who Are Alive*, has been published by the Fortune Press and can be obtained from local book-sellers. Contributions are invited for the second anthology of contemporary poetry which is now in preparation. Although new work is preferred, poems which have already appeared in magazines and periodicals may be accepted, but full details of such publications should be given.

We intend to follow up *The Northern Anthology of Contemporary Poetry* (to be published by Harraps later in the year) with a collection devoted to the recent work of the younger North-English poets, and contributions for this volume will be welcomed.

All MSS should be sent to the Editor, 59 Orchard Avenue, Squires Gate, Blackpool, and a stamped addressed envelope should be enclosed if a reply is desired.

FRONT LINE GENERATION

A new social-literary movement known as *Front Line Generation* has been founded by Peter Ratazzi and Howard Sergeant, with its principal object 'to express the need for a complete revolution in the approach to the problems of our time, a change of heart in the individual, and a transformation of social values'. Regional groups are being formed in various parts of the country. Full details of the aims of this movement can be obtained from : Secretariat F. L. G. 39a Primrose Gardens, Belsize Grove, London N.W.3.

SOME NOTES ON SIDNEY KEYES

ERNST SIGLER

THOUGH undoubtedly it incapacitates one from assessing a writer's achievement finally, contemporaneity is helpful to the attempt at participation in his poetry. Time will not inevitably tell why this or that poet's work should have made an impression on his contemporaries: the most scrupulous historian, as closely as possible acquainted with the peculiarities of an age, may yet be unable to determine the causes of success or failure of a certain writer; and the casual reader will certainly soon be lost in distortions if he tries to judge a writer of the past by his time, or vice versa.

What will read like a cliché to most people is here stated again in the attempt to note some of the reasons for the public acclaim of the work of the late Sidney Keyes. Its impact has been extraordinary, especially on people who do not normally find anything good to say for 'Modern' poetry: there are those—and I have had this said to me—who believe him to be the most important poet of this war. Nor were there many reviewers of his *Collected Poems*¹ who did not find the book almost wholly praiseworthy. The two astonishing aspects of this creation of a myth about Sidney Keyes are, firstly, the ease and speed with which it was created, and secondly, that the poet, picked for his halo largely, though not entirely, because of his youth and his death

in battle, should have left behind him work of a high enough quality to survive the process of canonization : even as far as members of his generation, best fitted to understand him, are concerned.

A comparison of his success with that of Rupert Brooke is hardly possible : Brooke's fame, for many people, rests on the figure he represented in some sonnets written on the outbreak of a war ; Keyes' collected poems, nearly a hundred, were not published until the end of this one. But if there is one poet in recent times with whom Keyes, though certainly less gifted, seems to have had some things in common, and along whose lines he might possibly have developed had he lived, it is Hugo von Hofmannsthal.

There is no space here to draw a detailed analogy : however, a striking similarity exists in the literary background of these poets, in the adulation both received early on, and in the unusually mature and polished poetry both had written before they were twenty².

Keyes, according to Mr. Meyer, had a sheltered upbringing of " rustic innocence and antique wisdom " in which his interest in literature was always encouraged—how different a childhood, incidentally, from that of Rilke, whose poetry influenced him as well as Hofmannsthal. And just as the most important experiences in Hofmannsthal's adolescence were the plays of Goethe, especially his *Faust*, the poems of Novalis and Hölderlin and the ideals of George, so for Keyes they were the poems of Donne, Webster, Beddoes, Clare, Housman and the later Yeats and Eliot. Thus one feels that when the time came for him to go on active service, he was already too much one of the

' Young men drunk with death's unquenchable wisdom '
on whom he prevailed to

' Remember your lovers who gave you more than love,'
for such outer experiences as war provides to have moved him subsequently to write poetry of a less passive, retrospective kind. This is not to say that the poetry he has written lacks virility, only that virility seems like one of a number of carefully adopted, tried and tested public characteristics, which he found it necessary to accept since he had had no opportunity to test them for himself in the tight shelter of his life. For that reason they are also shared by the reader without difficulty. Frequently Keyes concealed behind volubility, easily appreciable generalisations and popular morals (as in *Cervières*, for instance) the problems he met with in trying to find a level common to him and the imagined reader, of whom he had no first-hand knowledge. And he did this, in perhaps the only way possible to him, by combining

effectively "pastoral and symbolic images" and the language of the Romantics and the post-Symbolists with invocations ('O my friends'; 'O Rome, you city of singers') and selected commonplaces ('So take no rations'; 'I am the man who groped for words and found / An arrow in my hand'; 'His eyes grew cold as lead'; 'The soldiers' weariness'; 'An army of twisted limbs').

It would be foolish to stress, as one reviewer did, that his mind was years in advance of his physical age: his promise and the early achievement of his inspiration were of a kind to be envied even by many more adult poets. But his youth and the peculiarities of his life did impose certain limitations upon his poetry, and though he would doubtlessly have rid himself of these, it is as well to remember them. Thus, had he lived, he would surely have revised the adolescent ideas about Germans expressed in the letter quoted by Mr. Meyer on page xx. of the Introduction. He would have advanced from the wholesale simplification of the 'conception of death' which it took Rilke a lifetime, not to formulate, but to change and consider again and again. (One wonders, was it more than the Rilke influence which moved him to this conclusion of one of his best poems:

' And the tall miraculous city
That I walked in, will never house me.'

And a preoccupation with 'death and the macabre' in a poet has its appeal on the readers, but will only be believed in the long run if one is convinced that it is neither pose nor fetish but has grown out of experience, of whatever kind. It may produce, as it did in Sidney Keyes, some beautiful poetry: but it may prove dangerous when the poet has reached greater maturity. It is tragic that he did not live to fulfil the promise that he would have overcome these dangers.

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1. *The Collected Poems of Sidney Keyes* with a Memoir and Notes by Michael Meyer (Routledge).
 2. An excellent edition of Hofmannsthal's *Der Tor Und Der Tod* was recently published by Basil Blackwell. The introduction by the editor contains a short survey of Hofmannsthal's life and work.

REVIEWS

For Those Who Are Alive edited by Howard Sergeant (Fortune Press) 6s.

DURING the war years more nonsense has been written in the name of poetry than at any other period in its long history. In desperation the less assiduous reader has reverted to familiar ground rather than explore a desert for the exiguous oases. But thanks to the work of a few pioneers, the sorting has gone on and, like radium from pitch-blende, the vital product has been isolated. *For Those Who Are Alive* is the result of such a process and its substance justifies the belief that the younger poets have made a valuable contribution to their art.

In this anthology are assembled poems of diverse character and construction; many memorable; some exquisite; none inconsequential. *Nocturne* by Hugo Manning and *For the War Children* by Sylvia Read deserve particular mention. To those interested in the study of contemporary tendencies this collection will have special appeal, and few will turn its pages without some new experience of beauty.

LIONEL MONTEITH

Strange Tempe by Margaret Crosland 5s. }
The Leavening Air by Howard Sergeant 5s. } (Fortune Press)

THE poet who can write of love, in the twentieth century, with freshness and reality, is rare; but Miss Crosland has done exactly that. In this book of some thirty poems, most of which are concerned with love, she reflects the harshness of our time to the more tender susceptibilities of the individual. Her voice is essentially the voice of woman and, true to the scene, its hungering vitality is tempered with an almost laconic acceptance of "... the endless parting and the last embracing."

If her work is modern, it is not obscure; the imagery is clear and substantive, and her form is elegant. Harmony and proportion in most of the poems spring from the subject itself—therein lies the essence of her success. This poetry is of excellent quality, although not great, but it remains to be seen whether Miss Crosland can apply her technical skill outside the single theme from which she has derived so potent a stimulus.

Contrasted as a selection is the balanced diversity of Mr. Sergeant's *The Leavening Air*. Here, we feel, is an individual who, refusing to be fettered by adherence to any single technique, finds expression in poetry for a vision that is cognisant of reality, and an emotional awareness that has both beauty and meaning.

Love and nature find their places, and the consciousness of an ailing society does not obscure from the poet the "hoped-for kingdom," nor lose for him the intimacy and radiance of personal things. In form and construction there can have been few volumes from a single pen so varied and, consequently, quotation here could not be representative. Vivid and original imagery, combined with real craftsmanship in the employment of technical devices, suggest the critic's mind at work behind the scenes.

This volume is significant, not only as a work of cultural value, but more, because it marks the emergence of a poet of great potentiality.

LIONEL MONTEITH

Writers of Tomorrow No. 3 edited by Peter Ratazzi. 1/6d.

(Clark's Publications, Bristol)

THIS third collection by Peter Ratazzi of poems, articles and stories by younger writers has, even at first reading, one valuable merit—the writing harmonises.

Amongst the prose, *Nocturne*, an imaginative story by Daphne Short, is one of the most finished, and I particularly liked Rayner Heppenstall's *Local Boy* for its controlled satire. The humorous advice of P. L. H. Smith on *How to Become a Writer* is in the style of *Punch* with a kick and very successful. The standard of poetry is high: there are poems by Paul Potts, John Bayliss (whose poem *The Castle* is among his best work), and Howard Sergeant—the latter's *High Kingdom* revealing, technically, a striking use of assonance, and emotionally, a deep understanding of the mind of a small child, a personal understanding the poet is able to communicate.

ALLAN PRIOR

Angry Penguins: edited by Max Harris and John Reed, Australia.

THE joke is too good to become stale. The editors of the Australian periodical *Angry Penguins* were made to look ridiculous last year when the story leaked out that they had accepted the deliberate concoctions of two Australian writers as the work of a poetic genius who had died young. Subsequently the editors held an inquest on the whole business by inviting opinions from no less than 16 literary and

artistic authorities (including Herbert Read) and the verdict is that, hoax or not, the deliberate creations *did* contain some good work, and occasionally real poetry—largely because the subconscious will out, however hard one tries to suppress it. I have not the text before me, but what scraps I have seen do not impress me. Perhaps one critic was right when he pointed out that Stewart and McAuley ('Ern Malley') had done poetry a real service—they had given it some news value in a prosy world. This is more important than feeling aggrieved at being hoaxed, or trying to prove that one has not been hoaxed, or even attempting to answer the biggest question of all 'What is poetry?'

MARGARET CROSLAND

Since the above was written the next number of *Angry Penguins* has been received. This periodical, which came into existence at the beginning of the war, has made remarkable progress. The latest issue (184 pages) takes in its stride new sections on Music, Films and Jazz: this in addition to poetry from America, Australia, England and New Zealand; art and sociological essays; articles, stories, and reviews. In the limited space at my disposal it is impossible to do full justice to the publication, but briefly—it combines freshness and virility with a high standard of writing; and if it adopts an aggressively self-conscious attitude towards its contemporaries, that is probably a reaction to the hostile criticism it has received from the less adventurous poetry magazines. (Ed.)

PUBLICATIONS RECEIVED

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|-------------------------------------|---|---|---|
| <i>The City in the Sun.</i> | Poems by Peter Noble. | } | Pendulum
Publications
1s. each |
| <i>For Whom There is No Spring.</i> | Poems by | | |
| | Sidney D. Tremayne. | | |
| <i>Wheat by the Winepress.</i> | Poems—Henry N. Forbes | | |
| | (British Authors Press) | | 3/6d. |
| <i>The Gentle Heart.</i> | Poems—J. K. G. Hoffman (A. Niccoli, Napoli). | | |
| <i>Midland Poems.</i> | Edgar Billingham. (Cornish Bros. Ltd.) | | 2/6d. |
| <i>Jazz Forum No. 1.</i> | Ed. by Albert McCarthy (Delphic Press). | | 2/6d. |
| <i>Life and Fantasy.</i> | Short Stories (Alliance Press). | | 2/- |
| <i>New Generation.</i> | New controversial magazine; ed. by Peter Ratazzi. | | |
| | (New Generation Press). | | 1/6d. |
| <i>Personal Column</i> | Peter Standring. | } | One-act plays
(Kelvedon Publishers)
1/- each. |
| <i>Back to Zero</i> | Arthur Bax. | | |
| <i>The Star</i> | Christopher Newall. | | |